

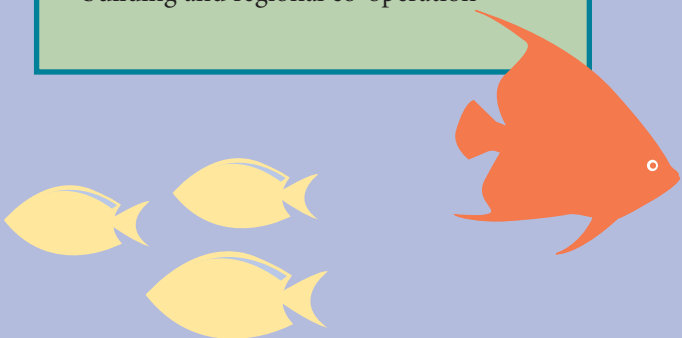
What is SPAW?

The Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment for the Wider Caribbean Region (Cartagena Convention, 1983) is the only region-wide environmental treaty that protects critical marine and coastal ecosystems, while promoting regional co-operation and sustainable development.

In April 1990, Parties to the Cartagena Convention adopted *the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW Protocol)*, a regional agreement for biodiversity management and conservation in the WCR. The SPAW Protocol became international law in June 2000, when it was ratified by the ninth Contracting Party.

The SPAW Protocol works through:

- detailed provisions to address the establishment of protected areas and buffer zones for conservation of wildlife
- national and regional co-operative measures for the protection of animal and plant species
- environmental impact assessments, research, education, public awareness, community participation, capacity building and regional co-operation



How does the SPAW Protocol work?

Since the adoption of SPAW in 1990, Governments decided that action could not await entry into force of the Protocol. A Regional Programme on SPAW was developed to help address priority issues under the Protocol and the framework of the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP).

The SPAW Programme provides support to CEP member governments in the following areas:

- Promotion of best practices and training for sustainable tourism within the public and private sectors
- Monitoring and management of coral reef ecosystems, including co-ordination with the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI)
- Establishment of a regional network of marine protected areas and an accompanying database to assist these areas with information sharing and problem solving
- Strengthening of protected areas through technical assistance, training, capacity building and revenue generation
- Development of guidelines and recovery plans for species conservation
- Linkages to other Protocols of the Cartagena Convention (e.g., the Protocol Concerning Co-operation in Combating Oil Spills in the Wider Caribbean Region and the Protocol Concerning Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities)
- Education and public awareness on species and ecosystems conservation and sustainable management

How does SPAW assist Governments?

Becoming a Contracting Party to the SPAW Protocol provides several benefits to participating countries. The SPAW Programme activities and other regional co-operative opportunities will:

- Provide direct assistance for the management of coastal and marine resources
- Demonstrate to tourists, donors and the international community the country's commitment and dedication to biodiversity conservation
- Provide opportunities for partnerships and co-ordination on technical assistance, research, education and capacity building on coastal and marine resource initiatives
- Build linkages with other environmental agreements applicable to the region and offer guidance for their implementation
- Access funding from donors, CEP projects and other relevant initiatives
- Offer technical assistance and expertise through the SPAW Regional Activity Center (RAC), established in 2000 in Guadeloupe for the implementation of SPAW activities at the request of the Parties

SPAW was developed by and for the Governments of the WCR, therefore, its policies are specific to local and regional concerns.

There are no direct financial obligations for the Parties. Governments contribute on a voluntary basis to CEP regardless of their status within the Convention and its Protocols.

What is the relationship of SPAW to other environmental treaties?

The Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) has co-operative agreements with several global environmental treaties.

The Governments of the Caribbean recognize SPAW as a significant vehicle to assist with implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). SPAW and the CBD are distinct agreements, but work in synergy to achieve common objectives. A co-operative agreement between SPAW and CBD helps to guide the Secretariats of the two treaties.

Co-operative agreements also exist with other global initiatives related to and collaborating with SPAW including the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)-IOCARIBE. Further collaboration exists with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention), the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) and ICRI's Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network. SPAW and these initiatives share similar objectives. Therefore, joint activities maximize resources while increasing communication and co-ordination among Governments.



Why should countries join SPAW?

SPAW is the only legal instrument for the WCR that protects critical ecosystems and species while encouraging sustainable economic growth.

Co-operation among all countries in the WCR is essential to achieve sustainable growth without jeopardizing the well-being of future generations.

More than 70% of the 80 million residents of the Caribbean live in coastal communities and much of the economy is dependent on the coastal resources for tourism and commercial fishing. As many as 33 million international tourists support local economies, representing US \$19.5 billion for the region. For example, the Caribbean is host to 60% of the world's leisure divers. Whale watching is a growing ecotourism activity, drawing approximately 136,000 people and earning more than US \$12 million annually.

While this economic growth benefits the area, the Caribbean's natural resources are disappearing at an astounding rate. In a 1994 assessment, some 35% of fish stocks in the Caribbean were considered over-exploited. In the region, 22% of coral reefs are already lost and many more are seriously threatened. Approximately 300 protected areas have been declared in the last 20 years, but only 30% are being appropriately managed.

By joining SPAW, countries receive support in their efforts towards:

- sustainable tourism
- public awareness
- technical assistance
- regional networking
- sustainable fisheries
- working partnerships
- conservation education

Joining SPAW ensures a sustainable development for future generations.



What are the objectives of SPAW?

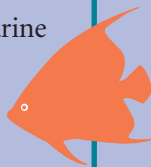
Recognizing the dependency of the Wider Caribbean Region on its coastal and marine resources, the SPAW Protocol:

■ Safeguards Sensitive Habitats

Protects, preserves and sustainably manages critical ecosystems such as coral reefs and mangroves and promotes their value to ecological health and economic well-being

■ Protects Endangered and Critical Species

Undertakes conservation measures to protect threatened and endangered species of plants and animals, as well as measures to prevent species from becoming threatened or endangered and to ensure recovery and restoration



How does a Government join SPAW?

Any State in the WCR that is Party to the Cartagena Convention may join the Protocol by ratification or accession. Ratification refers to those countries that signed the Protocol prior to 1991 and accession refers to countries which are not signatories. Instruments of ratification or accession to the Protocol shall be deposited with the Government of the Republic of Colombia, which functions as Depository for the SPAW Protocol.

To ratify or accede, a Government's Ministry of Foreign Affairs must obtain a certified copy of the SPAW Protocol from:

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Division of International Co-operation
Calle 10 No. 35-52
Palacio de San Carlos
Bogota, Colombia**

Telephone: (571) 566-7077

Telefax: (571) 562-5903/341-6777

For current information on Parties to SPAW and a copy of the SPAW Protocol and its Annexes, search UNEP/CEP web page:
www/cep/unep.org



UNEP



For additional information:

UNEP-CAR/RCU

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SPAW



PRESERVING OUR FUTURE:

*Protecting Marine Biodiversity
in the Wider Caribbean Region*

The people of the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) depend greatly on the area's coastal and marine resources for their economic, social and cultural well-being.

Two of the region's major economic activities, tourism and fisheries, are totally dependent on these resources, which are disappearing and degrading at an alarming rate. This degradation is due to unsustainable practices such as overfishing, unplanned coastal development and pollution.

The Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife Protocol (SPAW Protocol) provides the first wide-reaching solution to this socio-economic and ecological dilemma.

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